

THE  
State of Religion  
IN  
NEW-ENGLAND,

Since the Reverend

Mr. George Whitefield's ARRIVAL there,

IN

A LETTER from a Gentleman in *New-England* to his Friend in *Glasgow*.

To which is subjoined an

APPENDIX, containing ATTESTATIONS  
of the principal FACTS in the LETTER,

By The Reverend

Mr. CHAUNET, Pastor of the first Church of Christ in <i>Boston</i> ,	of a Church in <i>Marblehead</i> , Mr. TURELL,
Mr. JOHN CALDWELL, in <i>New-London</i> & <i>Nerry</i> ,	Mr. JONATHAN PARSONS Minister at <i>Lyme</i> , and
Mr. JOHN BARNARD Pastor	Dr. BENJAMIN COLMAN, Minister in <i>Boston</i> .

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

**THE** Reader may depend upon it, that the following Letter is genuine, from a Gentleman who has always had a good Character for sound Understanding, Integrity, Sobriety of Manners, and Piety; and, notwithstanding his Engagements in secular Affairs, has never been an unconcerned Spectator of any Thing which might affect the State of Religion. The Abstracts taken from the several Papers printed in Boston, need no other Vouchers than the several Pamphlets themselves, of which there are Copies in this City. And these sufficiently confirm the Account given in this Gentleman's Letter.

A

## LETTER

FROM A

GENTLEMAN in NEW-ENGLAND, &amp;c.

May 24. 1742.

S I R,

I AM sorry you have had such Accounts of Persons and Things transmitted to you from this Country, as you mention in your Letter. They are far from being true, and must come from Men of narrow Minds and great Bigottry, or such as basely affect Popularity, or well-meaning but weak Christians, of little knowledge of Human Nature, or the History of Mankind. Indeed some Persons of very good Sense were once inclined to think that God was doing Wonders in this Place. But that was at a Time when the superstitious Pannick

Pannick run very high, and bore down everybody that was not well fixed and established either by a natural Steadiness of Temper, or by strong Reason and Reflection. But as soon as the Passions of the People subsided, and Men could coolly and calmly consider, almost every one of but tolerable Sense and Understanding in religious Matters, in great measure changed their Opinions of the Spirit that prevailed here, and had been raised by *Whitefield* and *Tennant*.

THE first mentioned of these Gentlemen collected in this Province between five and six hundred Pounds *Sterling* for his *Orphan-house* in *Georgia*. He was a bold and importunate Beggar; he took all Ways imaginable to persuade the People to give him Money; and he was insatiable as the Grave. When he went away from this Place, he left them with much such Impressions as he seems to have made upon the good People in *Scotland*. Some of the Ministers, particularly Mr. *Web* and Mr. *Cooper* in *Boston*, two great Admirers of *Whitefield* and *Tennant*, and flaming Zealots for certain favourite Opinions and Tenets, set up Evening-Lectures to cherish and Water the Seed sown by them. At these Meetings *Whitefield* was prayed for by Name, and spoken of as the Angel flying over the Earth with the everlasting Gospel. Many of the Preachers meanly imitated his Way of Preaching even to the manner of his Pronunciation, the Gesture of his Body, and stretching out of his Arms. Mr.



MR. Tenuant in a few Months after Mr. *Whitefield* was gone, came to carry on the Work which he had begun. For several Years, this Man hath been a settled Minister in the *Jerseys*, a Colony about three hundred Miles South-west from *Boston*; and as I have often heard, he hath always been remarkable in those Parts for his uncharitable and divisive Courses. He is a Man of but poor natural Parts, and no Learning, except a little in the disputed Points between the *Calvinists* and *Arminians*. In the Pulpit he was when he first came here, an awkward and ridiculous Ape of *Whitefield*, for his Appearance is very clownish. His great Business in his Sermons was either to puzzle or to frighten his Hearers, but especially the last, which he did by roaring out and bellowing, *Hell, Damnation, Devils*, and all the *Dreadful Words* he could think of. Ministers in general he called Carnal, Unconverted, Blind-leaders-of-the-blind, rational, moral, dry, husky Preachers, that were leading their People to Hell. He exhorted the People to leave them, to go about exhorting one another, and telling their Experiences. He was followed by all sorts of People, as much as *Whitefield* was, and by many prefer'd to him. He was most censorious and uncharitable. Every one that was not exactly of his Mind, he damned without Mercy. His Sermons sometimes were as confused and senseless as you can imagine. He seem'd to have a particular

particular Quarrel with Reason, Learning and Morality, for he seldom finished a Sermon without saying something against them.

FROM such Men as these (*Whitefield* and *Tennant*) and such Doctrines and Ways of Preaching as theirs, what Fruit can you expect? Is it possible that the Exercise of Reason and Understanding should be promoted by such as make it their Business to vilify Reason and Understanding? Can solid and substantial Religion flow from superstitious, enthusiastick and nonsensical Preachers and Sermons? Can Charity the Queen of all the Graces be exalted by Slaves to Censoriousness, Hatred, and Evil-speaking? Can Patience, Meekness, Humility and other such Virtues be the Effects of Anger, Wrath, Pride, Arrogance, Impudence? As well may Light shine out of Darkness, or sweet Streams flow from a bitter Fountain. Indeed the People were roused and alarmed, and the general Cry was, *What shall we do to be saved?* But their Concern was wild, frantick, visionary, distracted and directed to false Methods of making their Peace with God, and attaining unto pure and undefiled Religion. As some People when their House is suddenly set on Fire, are greatly surprized, and run about with great Diligence to save their Goods, but throw their Glasses and other brittle Ware out at the Windows, whilst with great Care and Softness, they take up a joint Stool, and carry it out of Doors: So did the People here behave

with

with respect to their Souls, when frightened and terrified by the Preaching of *Whitefield* and *Tennant*; they thought themselves in great Danger, they run Day and Night to Lectures, to Ministers, to private Meetings, to learn what they should do to be saved; but unhappily for them, they took up with the Show of Religion instead of the Substance; or they formed unworthy Notions of God and Virtue, instead of fixing in their Minds the rational and sublime Sentiments of the New Testament.

ACCORDINGLY the boasted Converts, not One of an Hundred excepted, make Religion to consist in the feeling of inward Impulses and Impressions, in an inexplicable Faith, Joys, Extacys, hearing of Sermons and such like Things. They are bigotted to certain Opinions which they do not understand, and have not the least Degree of Charity for those that are of another Way of thinking. They are all of them vain, self-conceited, superstitious, enthusiastick, censorious, Slanderers; Reason, Learning, Morality they professedly disregard: Should they hear a Minister preach in the most evangelical Manner upon any Moral Duty, or recommend the Exercise of Reason and Understanding, they would call him a dry, husky, *Arminian* Preacher, and conclude for certain that he was not converted. No Sermons please but such as move and heat the Passions, or scar and frighten them; solid Instruction is Heathen Morality, or carnal Preaching.

THERE

THERE has been great Confusion in the Churches: As soon as People are convicted, as the Phrase is, or converted, they become very turbulent, and disorderly. They give their Minister, if he is not of this new Way, a great deal of Trouble, and form Parties to turn him away from his Charge. Order, Regularity, Decency, and such Things, are made light of; and, in their Opinion, the more Confusion there is, the more there is of the Spirit of God amongst them. The Ministers here are divided, and look upon one another with an evil and jealous Eye. Several of them have rambled through the Country, after the Pattern of Mr. *Whitefield*, and without asking leave of the Minister of the Parish, have gathered the People together, and in a riotous manner entred the Meeting-house and preached. Very few Ministers have dared to open their Mouths in favour of Reason, Virtue, Order or any-thing that is thought to be against this Work. There is a Creature here whom perhaps you never heard of before. It is called an *Exhorter*. It is of both Sexes, but generally of the Male, and young. Its distinguishing Qualities are *Ignorance, Impudence, Zeal*. Numbers of these Exhorters are amongst the People here. They go from Town to Town, creep into Houses, lead Captive silly Women, and then the Men. Such of them as have good Voices do great Execution; they move their Hearers, make them cry, faint, swoon, fall  
into

into Convulsions. The Converts are all made in this Manner; first, they become concerned for their Souls, and greatly distressed, and not rarely distracted. In this Condition they continue for some Days, and then all at once without any visible Means, they come out of their dark and disconsolate State, all Light, Joy, Extacy. This they express by their Talk to their Neighbours, which they call, telling their Experiences, and, in many Places, by immoderate Laughter, and singing of Hymns. Their Joy is sometimes so great, that their Eyes sparkle, and Faces shine, which are certain Signs of the Spirit of God's being in them.

THERE are many Lectures over all the Country on the Week-days; the People are more affected with these than with the Worship on the Sabbath-day. In many Towns at these Lectures, *Hundreds* have screamed out at once whilst the Minister was preaching, so that he has been obliged to leave off his Sermon and go down to the Persons in Distress and comfort them. But the *Exhorters* are the best beloved Creatures. The Ministers have generally endeavoured to preserve some kind of Order, and been satisfied with the crying out of a Number at the hearing of their Sermons; (the Minister that never made some body or other cry, is unconverted) but the Exhorters tarry in the Meeting-house with the People after the Minister is gone, and sometimes several of them exhort at once in different Parts of the Houle,



and then there is *terrible Doings*. You may hear Screaming, Singing, Laughing, Praying, all at once; and in other Parts they fall into Visions, Trances, Convulsions. When they come out of their Trances, they commonly tell a senseless Story of Heaven and Hell, and whom and what they saw there. In their Trances they neither hear, nor see, nor feel any more than if they were dead. There are several unaccountable Appearances whilst they are in these Fits, which the Converts impute to the Spirit of God, but which others ascribe to the Devil; but the wisest say are Effects of Disorders in the Brain or in the animal Spirits. In some Towns, several Persons, both Men and Women, that formerly were sober, and to all appearance truly pious, are raving distracted, so that they are confined and chained. Many fall into Epilepsies as they walk the Streets, or in their Houses. These Things are ascribed, and, I believe, with good Reason, to their continual Attention to one Set of Ideas, the Heat that is raised in their Imagination, Watchings, Fastings beyond Measure. They go about asking one another, *How do you feel? Have you seen Christ?* And if a Number of Converted meet together, they break out into a Laugh that surprizes every one, not infected with their Distemper. By the good Providence of God they have not been quite so wild in *Boston*. The Men of Sense ventured to appear against carrying the Matter so far, and damp'd  
the

the Ministers and People's Zeal. Only *M—ad's* Meeting-house, (that Gentleman, famous it seems with you) there have been Screamings once or twice. He is Minister to the Presbyterian *Irish* in *Boston*, as ignorant, stupid, conceited, impudent, ill-natured and turbulent a Man as ever you knew. He is, and always has been, despised by every body of tolerable Sense; so wretched a Preacher, that I have heard Ministers, who heard him preach on the Week-day, say, that it would be profaning the Sabbath, to go and hear him on the Lord's Day; so mischievous, that he hath bred Divisions every-where among the poor *Irish*. He was formerly a Member of the *Irish* Presbytery, but was suspended for his indecent Language at their Meetings, his Calumny and Slander, his factious and divisive Courses; under which Suspension he is at this Day. But he preaches up *Whitefield* and *Tennant*, and this hath covered all his Faults, and dubb'd him a great Man. I suppose you have heard of him from the common Sailors, that have been in *Boston*. He speaks Nonsense very fluently, and this catches the Ignorant. I wonder you have not likewise heard of one *F—ce*, one of *M—ad's* Congregation, and a common Porter, He has pray'd and exhorted in Publick, and the Power of God, in their Phrase, has remarkably attended him.

THERE is in the Colony of *Connecticut*, a Lad (about eighteen Years of Age, and that is

stone-blind, and always was so) performing Wonders. He lived in *Boston*, and used to make Fly-catchers. His Memory is pretty good, so that by hearing some of *Whitefield's* Sermons often read over, he got them by Heart so as to repeat them again to others. Smitten with the Disease of Preaching he left *Boston*, not finding sufficient Encouragement there, and travelled up to *Connecticut*. There, Numbers of People attend his Discourses; the Ministers, the Ministers, I say, invite him to their Pulpits, and that on the Lord's Day, they sit and hear him with great seriousness, and encourage their People to do the same. He repeats to them a Sermon of *Mr. Whitefield's*, or *Tennant's*, or some of that Way. Whilst he is repeating, he beats the Pulpit with his Fists, knocks upon it with his Knees, and stamps with his Feet, and screams and hollows, so that the Audience cannot distinctly hear one Sentence; and yet Scores, nay, Hundreds of them have fallen down at once, and lyen sprawling upon the Floor. The People in that Colony are still wilder than these in *Boston*. The Converts all pretend to a Light within, without the Direction of which, they will not go about the ordinary Offices of Life. One of their Ministers is dismissed from his People for preaching, that an unconverted Man is not capable of understanding one Word of the Bible; and that to a converted Man, it is no better than an old Almanack, because he

has

has a brighter Light within. But not many Parishes would have turned away their Minister for such an Opinion as this. On the contrary, Numbers would have liked him the better for it. Venerable Old Men, that have spent all their Strength and Time in preaching the Gospel, and saving Souls, are fallen into great Contempt, they preach almost to the bare Walls, whilst an ignorant and impudent Fellow that perhaps has been remarkable for his former Villanies, and is liable to be cast into Prison by twenty Creditors, is mounthing it to Multitudes in the neighbouring Fields. *D--rt*, whose Name you have no doubt seen in their printed Accounts of things, is so evidently distracted, that was he in any sober Countrey in the World, he would be confined; and yet, in that Colony, he is attended with Crowds, and looked upon by Numbers as an Angel of God. In a hot Day, he strips to his Shirt, mounts a Cart, or any Eminence upon the Street, and roars and bellows, and flings about his Arms, till he is ready to drop down with the Violence of the Action.

THE College in *Connecticut* is broke up. The Students would neither mind their Studies, nor obey the Rules of the College. Almost all of them pretended to an inward Teacher which they ought to follow, and several of them made Excursions into the Countrey, and exhorted the People from Town to Town;

Town, so that the President was obliged to dismiss all of them from the College, and hath applied, as I heard, to the general Court, for Power to oblige the young Fellows to keep Order. The College in *Boston* was a little moved by the Preaching of *Tennant*. But I had Occasion to know what passed there, and I can assure you, not one half of them were greatly touched, and many of them not at all. That Pamphlet published in *Scotland*, *Christ riding in his Chariot of Salvation*, is stuffed with abominable Lies. The Students in *Boston* got nothing by *Whitefield* and *Tennant*, but Enthusiasm, Pride, a Contempt of their Betters, and intolerable Impudence. However, now, and for some Time past, they have returned to their former Sobriety, and behave with all Order and Decency. The Spirit raised by *Whitefield* and *Tennant*, is almost extinct among them.

IN the above-mentioned Pamphlet, it is said, When Mr. *Tennant* preached in *Marblehead*, *Charlestown*, &c. his Voice had like to have been drowned with their Out-crys. I have often had Occasion, since I came here, to see the Ministers in *Marblehead*, and only a Ferry parts *Charlestown* from *Boston*, and I never heard one Word of this before, which I must have done if it had been true. I verily believe it to be a Falshood. Young Children, say they, talk of the Things of God, as if they were Christians of 70 or 80 Years. Alas! how



ed to how easily are Mankind deceived! how fond  
 and are they to impose both upon themselves and  
 court, others! some of these Children I have seen  
 keep and conversed with; They did nothing but re-  
 peat what they had heard others say, and that in  
 a very childish manner. They were forward,  
 and talking Children, and in no other respect ex-  
 cell'd their Neighbours. Many of them are  
 now remarkable for their Impudence and un-  
 teachable Dispositions; and the Children in  
 all Parts of the Country, where this Spirit pre-  
 vails, are idle, Despilors of their Betters, dis-  
 obedient to Parents. In the Preface to the  
 Sermon published by Mr. *E—ds* of *Nar-*  
*hamptoun*, which I see is re-printed among  
 you, it is asserted, among several other things,  
 that there is a great Reformation in *Boston*,  
 and, particularly, that neither the Taverns,  
 nor Dancing-Schools are so much frequented  
 as they were. The contrary to which is abso-  
 lute Truth. One Church, by means of the  
 Spirit raised by *Whitefield* and *Tennant*, is  
 split in Pieces, so that the one half, after great  
 and unchristian Heats and Disputes, have left  
 the other: In all the Churches, except one or  
 two, which are through-paced Enthusiasts,  
 there are Heart-burnings and Mis-understand-  
 ings, and great Pains must be taken to keep  
 them together. Taverns are more frequented  
 than ever, and about six Weeks before that  
 Preface was published, a new Dancing-House  
 was added to what they had formerly. Near  
 Friends

Friends and Relations are estranged from one another more than ever was known in *Boston*; good Neighbours and Acquaintances do not now speak to one another, and all this is owing to the narrow and uncharitable Spirit of the new Converts.

I MUST do Justice to the Church of *England*. There are three Congregations of that Way in *Boston*, they all live in Love and Peace; their Ministers preach against Enthusiasm and Bigottry every Day, not above three or four at most, of some thousands that are of the Episcopal Way, and these poor senseless Women, are taken in with the new Light, as they call it. They all stand fast to the Church, and their Numbers increase very fast. There came a strolling Preacher from *Connecticut* to *Boston*, about six Weeks ago. He left the College but last Year. He knows not, they say, the first Principles of the Christian Religion. He is not able to speak two sentences without transgressing the common Rules of Grammar. His Sermons were the most stupid Stuff that ever came from a Man's Mouth. And yet he was admitted into the Pulpits of the largest Congregations in *Boston*, and you could not add one to his Audience; his Name is *B--ll*.

AFTER so melancholy an Account of Things, it will be a great Relief to you, to be told, that it is generally thought the Distemper in this Country, hath been at its Height for some Weeks, and that they are beginning to recover their

their Senses again. Their great Extravagances have opened the Eyes of several, and made them less violent than they were. Some Ministers that were in the Scheme have fallen off from it, all of them confess there are great Disorders going on; and many of them, tho' they say that there is much Good done yet at the same Time cry out, that Religion is in the greatest Danger, and that if the People do not become moderate, they will turn *Quakers, Infidels, and every Thing that is bad.* Some in *Boston* have dared to preach against Parts of the Work that are thought sacred by the Multitude, and the People are not quite so wild as formerly. So that if *Whitefield* does not return, it is hoped they shall become tolerably sober, tho' the bad Impressions that have been made upon the Minds of the young People, I'm afraid will have a lasting Effect.

I HAVE written you a long Letter, that you may see what you are in danger of, if you do not take care to withstand the Beginnings of Enthusiasm and Bigottry. I hope these Things have happened for a Warning to others, and will serve as Beacons to prevent your splitting upon the same Rocks. Enthusiasm is like a Fire that may be extinguished, if taken in time, but if once you allow it to get Head, it destroys all with irresistible Violence. It hath over-spread all the *English America*, and committed great Havock upon the Dominions of

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Honesty

Honesty and Truth, Goodness and Mercy, of every Thing worthy and valuable.

You may read this to any Person or Person you think fit; and I am,

*Sir,*

*Your most humble Servant,*

*A. M.*

A

## A P P E N D I X

CONTAINING

PROOFS of the FACTS in the foregoing LETTER, extracted from SERMONS preached by some of the most eminent MINISTERS in *New-England*, and lately printed at *Boston*; which were sent to a Gentleman who lives a few Miles from *Glasgow*.

*From the Reverend Mr. CHAUNCEY's Sermon on the Various Gifts of Ministers, preached at Boston, Decemb. 17. 1741. Pag. 34, 35.*

BRETHREN, I speak not these Things with a Design to offend any; but because they are a *Word in Season*: and whoever is not sensible of this, must be unacquainted with the Situation of Affairs in this Place. There has certainly been too much Heat and Strife about Ministers; some contending for one, others for another: and I believe no one will pretend to justify these hard Speeches, which have sometimes dropt from the Lips of those, who, I would hope, are otherwise good Christians.



If you prefer some Ministers to others, yet don't slight those, of whose Gifts you have not so high an Opinion.—bear with me, while I go on to caution you against such an Itch after other Preachers, as may lead you to forsake your own Ministers on the Lord's Day, to the breaking in upon the good Order of the Town: And I the rather mention this, because it has been taken Notice of by *the Body of your Ministers*, who have more than once come into an Agreement among themselves, not to ask those Ministers to preach on the Sabbath, who might be the Occasion of your coming into such Disorders on this holy Day. And this Agreement has been generally approv'd of by the most pious and judicious among us, so far as I can learn.

*From the same Sermon, Pag. 38, 39.*

Suffer me to transcribe a few Lines from a faithful Advice to the Churches of *New-England*, by several Ministers; some of whom were as noted for their Learning as any who have yet appear'd among us. *We are not unsensible, say they, that one Thing which has much expos'd some injudicious People among us, is an Opinion that illiterate Men may be serviceable and admirable Preachers.——And tho' some unlearn'd Men have been useful to the Interests of Religion, yet no Man ever decry'd Learning but was an Enemy to Religion, whe-*

*ther*

ether he knew it or no. — That Man was never worthy to preach one Sermon, who did not feel, and wou'd not own, that all the Learning that can be had, is little enough to accomplish an able Minister of the New Testament. This Advice is signed 'by Increase Mather, James Allen, Samuel Willard, Moses Fisk, Nehemiah Hobart, John Danforth, Cotton Mather, Nehemiah Walter, Jonathan Pierpoint, Joseph Etcher.

From Mr. CALDWELL'S Sermon on the Trial of the Spirit's Operating in this Part of the World. Preached at New-London-Derry, Boston, 1742. Pag. 36.

— Is that Spirit from God, that makes Men, for Revelations and heavenly Visions, take deluded Imaginations? — That Spirit, therefore, that begins with, or works most upon the Imagination, is only an imaginary Spirit of God; and such as depend upon such a Thing we may allow to be but imaginary Christians, Converts, and Children of God.

Is exceeding great Terror for the Consequences of Sin, and sudden Chearfulness succeeding in a short Time, sufficient Evidence for Men to found the Certainty of their being in a State of Favour with God upon? Who has not seen Numbers of Yesterday's Converts, talking boldly of their Experiences and Assurance, and in a few Days doing such Things

as are a Scandal to Humanity, as well as our holy Religion; giving Occasion to such as seek Occasion to *blaspheme that sacred Name by which we are all called?* 'Tis no doubt true, that the Wickedness and Apostacy of some, proves not that others will apostatise; but it plainly proves, that such Things as all that call themselves Converts, enjoy in common, are poor Grounds for Men to build the Certainty of Salvation upon.

*From Mr. CHAUNCY's Sermon on the New Creature. Preached at Boston, June 4, 1741. Pag. 25.*

—— But it ought to be remembred still further, ~~when persons are~~ under Convictions, they are the same weak, frail, imperfect Creatures they were before. And it, no doubt, sometimes happens, that the Work of Conviction, where it is really begun by the Spirit of God, is yet carried on to an undesirable Excess, through the Frailty of the Subject; either from Indisposition of Body, natural Weakness of Understanding, Ignorance of the Gospel, or Mistakes about the Fulness and Freeness of that Provision that is made in Christ for the Help of poor distress'd Sinners: And this, perhaps, is always the Case where the Concern is carried to so great a Height as to discompose the Mind, and unfit the Man to exert himself in the reasonable Exercise of his Powers about

the Affairs of Salvation; or when it leads to Despair; to undervalue the Grace of God, and the Merits of the Redeemer, as tho' they were insufficient for them.

*Pag. 38.* ——— It may seem strange, but 'tis too notorious a Truth, that the very Persons who can cry out of their own Unworthiness, and confess themselves the vilest and greatest Sinners, as having had their Eyes opened to see themselves filthy, wretched, damned Creatures; I say, 'tis too true, even of these Persons, that, in many Instances, they discover too much Pride. I beseech you in the Name of the great God of Heaven, as you value his Favour, and dread his Displeasure, to beware of this Sin. O take heed to yourselves, that ye be not puffed up with a vain Conceit of your own superior Sanctity.—

*From Mr. BARNARD's Sermon on Zeal for Good Works, Boston, March 25. 1742.*

*Pag. 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37.*

And now, my Brethren, Is it Zeal, I mean Zeal for God, and Religion, rightly so called, to set up an unlearned, and ignorant Ministry in the Church of Christ, that have no Pretensions to any extraordinary Call from God, only because, it may be, they are good Men, can read English, speak tolerable Sense, and give a good Exhortation, and have Assurance enough to go into the awful Desk, or gather  
Crowds

Crowds around them elsewhere? Or, is it Zeal in our People to flock after them in Drove, and turn their Backs, with Contempt enough upon their own able and faithful Ministers, which are of Christ's Appointment, that they may gratify their vain Curiosity, or, to speak in the Language of the Apostle \*, *After their own Lusts to heap up to themselves Teachers, having itching Ears?* Sure I am, that the Divine Law has drawn a sacred Enclosure about the Ministerial Office, both under the Old Testament, and the New: And therefore this cannot be a Zeal guided by Knowledge.

Or, is it Zeal, in Ministers of the Gospel, to ramble from Place to Place, where the golden Candlesticks are illuminated with burning and shining Lights, and where the true Doctrines of the Gospel are dispensed, in Simplicity, and with Power, and unasked, yea, without their Knowledge, invade other Shepherd's Flocks, and play the Bishop in another Man's Office; at the same Time leaving their own Flocks destitute of the ordinary Means of Grace? Sure I am, that such Things are contrary to the plain Laws of the Gospel; and therefore cannot be a Zeal according to Knowledge.

But stay, Sir, will some men say, here is nothing meant in all this but Good; and may not a great deal of Good be done by it?

\* 2 Tim. iv. 3.



In Answer to which, I say, I very well know that God can bring Good out of Evil, and I trust he will do so. But will this vindicate us, or any Men, in doing what they, or we ought not to do. I thought the Apostle had sufficiently determined \*, That no Man may do Evil, *As that Good may come of it.* Nor will any distant Hope of doing Good vindicate our going out of our own Line, without a plain Call of Providence; because this is to go out of God's Way: and I don't know what Right we, or any Men, have to hope that any Good will follow upon going out of God's Way.

Or, is it Zeal, in any Preachers artfully to wind themselves into the Affections of the People and stir up their Passions, by the Powers of Oratory, without conveying due Light into the reasonable Minds of their Hearers, (without which they will never be *Christians*, let their Passions burn ever so fiercely,) and to take Pains to puzzle them in their Religion, and at the same Time reproach their faithful Ministers, whom they know not, as Pharisees, Hypocrites, and carnal Formalists? What deeper Scheme can be laid to lead a People where such Men please? And truly, my Brethren, had I not, at present, more charitable Thoughts of some such, I should be ready, from this alone, immediately to conclude, that they were designing to overthrow the pure Religion of the Country.

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\* Rom. iii. 8.

Or, is it a Zeal for God, personally to address such as are deservedly of good Reputation for Religion, both by their Profession and their Lives, and such as it may be they never saw before, and know nothing of unbecoming the Gospel of Christ, and surprize them with the shocking Sound, *You are unconverted, you are unregenerate, you are in a damnable State;* when, it may be, the Persons they so address are really good and holy Persons, and so what they affirm is false in Fact, or, if they should not happen to be real serious Christians, 'tis nevertheless false in them, because they know it not? Whose Name do such Teachers come in? Whose Spirit are they influenced by? Verily, this is not a Zeal governed by Knowledge, Prudence, or Charity.

Again, Is it Zeal in Persons, when their Fervour breaks out in such Things as are really no Part of Religion, or wherein Religion is but little concerned; I mean, if their Neighbours are not just of their Opinion, and Practice, yea, and Experience too, in Religion; if they do not speak, exactly in the same Strain, about the New Birth, if they have not felt the same violent Pangs and Twinges of Conscience, and been affected with the same Measure of Humiliation, and Sorrow of Soul for Sin, which, they say, they have felt, and been affected with; presently to conclude, and pronounce, that they are unconverted, and in a damnable State, having never truly repented

of Sin, and come to Christ that they may be saved by him? Such Persons may think, that they of all Men are sure of Heaven, and damn all whom they imagine are not cast in the same Mould with them: But let me tell you, this Zeal looks more like the wild Fire of human Passions, Pride, and Self-Conceit, to say no worse, than a true Zeal for God; because it is destitute of the *Christian* Graces, of Meekness, and Humility, Love, and Charity, which are so essential to the *Christian* Religion: Nor know any Spirit more opposite to the Spirit of the Gospel.

Again; Is it Zeal to practise unlawful Methods to propagate a Cause, wherein, even Religion, and the Honour of God, may be concerned? May we kill our Neighbour to do God Service? Or, may we reproach and stain his Character, and blast his Name under a Pretence of advancing the Glory of God? Is the Spirit of Calumny, and Reproach, and Reviling, and Slander, and Lying, which, it is to be feared, has very much prevailed among many of those that have been very zealous, in the present Affair, by the great Complaints of it, (something of which also I have known, and felt,) I say, is this Spirit a Token of the Work of God upon them, and their being truly zealous in his Cause? Verily, my Neighbours, all the Pretensions in the World, to Zeal for God, will not alter the Nature of Good and Evil. Lying will be Lying, and Calum-

ny will be Calumny; let Men do what they will. And do not such Things look like the Heat of human Passions, of Men having an high Opinion of themselves, and a low Opinion of others? And where Zeal breaks out so furiously in the unjust Censures of the Tongue, is it not very probable, that it is only the Want of Power that prevents their being as furious in the Cruelty of their Actions? And their greatest Fondness for those of their own Party, if I may use the Phrase, will not atone for this Spirit towards them that differ from them.

Or, is it Zeal, in ignorant and weak People, who, possibly, may have some good Dispositions, to run about, filling their Neighbours Ears with passionate Outcries, and enflaming their Passions, till their Breasts swell, and are ready to burst, and their Blood is ready to fly out in their Faces, and they are almost entirely bereft of their Reason, and, it may be, join with them in one hideous Exclamation, and the best Account they can give of it is, that they cannot help it? Or is it Zeal for such Persons to pretend Trances, and Visions of *Christ*, and Heaven, and Hell, and the State of Persons in the unseen World? I wonder they have not yet pretended Inspiration also! Harken, my beloved Brethren, do we not distinguish the human Passions, by the Manner of their Working, and the Effects of them; and the working of the *Spirit* of God, upon the human

they man Passions, by his Manner? Is it not the  
 the natural Working of the human Passions, more  
 and or less less, to put us beside ourselves, and out  
 of our own Government, by hindering the  
 it so free Exercise of our Reason? And is it not  
 the Working of the Holy Spirit, upon our  
 the Passions, to direct and regulate them, to con-  
 as furey clearer Light into our Minds, that we may  
 And act as Men? Does the Holy Spirit design to  
 own deprive us of our Reason, to make Christians  
 stone of us? Does not he ever adapt himself to our  
 from rational Nature, in all his open Offers, and  
 inward Strivings with us? which necessarily  
 people, suppose the free Exercise of our Reason; or  
 possi- how should we comply with his Motions and  
 bours Strivings with us? Or, be faulty if we did not?  
 ming Would it not look more like the Workings of  
 d are the Spirit of God, upon the Hearts of People,  
 to fly for them, under a deep Concern of Soul for  
 entire- their eternal Salvation, to retire to their secret  
 e, join Devotions, and humble themselves before God,  
 , and in a Sense of their Sins, and earnestly beg help  
 , that from him, that they may be led to a saving  
 h Per- closure with the Lord Jesus Christ, by a true  
 Christ, and lively Faith, and to an unfeigned Repen-  
 F Per- tance, and Life of Holiness, and go to their  
 y have Minister to direct them wherein they need  
 arken, Direction, and improve their most serious  
 anguish Thoughts upon what they shall do to be saved,  
 their and immediately set upon the doing of it? And  
 and the does it not look like an heated Imagination,  
 e hu- warm Passions, and the Spirit of a Pharisee,  
 man who



who prayed in the Streets, and gave Alms to be seen of Men, and to have Honour from them, for Persons to neglect their Business, and run about, from House to House to House, and from Town to Town, to tell the World what they feel, and what they do?

And, that I may not quite tire you, finally; Is it Zeal to disturb and interrupt the Worship of God, with the ungovernableness of human Passions, and such confused Clamours, and Disorders, as have been in some Places, which it is a Shame to speak of, and shocking to think of? Has God no Right to his Worship, because some are acted by lawless Passions? Or, is the End of Worship answered by such Disorders? Or, if we were all generally thrown into like Disorders, must we for ever give up all Worship for the future, because the End is answered? Or, have the rest of the Community no Acknowledgments to make, no Blessings to ask, or receive, because some are in such a Condition, that they have no Command of themselves? And if, indeed, they have no Command of themselves, at such a Time, what Spirit acts them? Verily; it is to be feared that there is but little true solid Religion, at the Bottom, where the Passions of Men are so turbulent, and furious; for *the Wrath of Man worketh not the Righteousness of God* \*. And indeed, how should it? The more a Man's Passions are let loose upon him, the less Reason

son will he have in Exercise, and therefore be the less fit for that which is the most sober and rational Thing in the World. While we suffer our Passions to cloud our Understandings, and that they will do, if we give Scope to them, we shall not be very likely to form a true Judgment, neither of Things, nor Persons, neither of ourselves, nor others: and no Wonder, then, if Persons under the Influence of strong Passions, and weak Reasoning, are least to take such Methods, as pour the utmost Contempt upon Religion, and turn it into Farce and Ridicule, while they pretend to promote it.

I have not said these Things, my Brethren, to discourage any real Work of God among us, which I trust I do, and shall labour, according to my Ability, and Discernment, to promote with my whole Heart; but I fear many weak People are led into great Mistakes of the Nature of Religion, and a true Zeal about it, and have sincerely aimed at the rectifying some Mistakes, and the separating of the vile from the Holy.

And one Thing, that has greatly swayed with me to say any-thing about these Affairs, is the fearful Apprehensions I am under of the fatal Consequences of such Mistakes, in the present State of Affairs among us, if it be not wisely managed; I mean, lest the present heat, about Religion, sink into total Irreligion, from the ill Use, which the Enemies of all

all true Religion, will make of what they observe, in the irregular Conduct, of some that are very zealous; and from the natural Swing of the human Passions.

The World has had many Instances of apparent Zeal for Religion, and good Men have been carried away with the strong Current, which have evidently prov'd, in the Conclusion, to be nothing more than human Passions, heated Imagination, accompanied with satanic Delusions, who knows how, and when, and upon what Occasion, and after what Manner, to transform himself into an Angel of Light. And they have generally, if not always, been so, when they have been attended with Noise and Tumult, with Apparitions, and Visions, and Trances, with passionate Desires of seeing Christ, and Heaven, and conversing with Angels, with the Pretensions of low, and mean, and ignorant People to be influenced by the Divine Spirit, in taking upon them to be Preachers of the Gospel, and Teachers of others, and these admired, and followed in Crowds, from Place to Place, and with a general Clamour against the standing Ministers, tho' sound in their Doctrine, and exemplary in their Lives, as Pharisees, Formalists, Hypocrites, and the like.

The human Passions rarely swing so forcibly, and far, one Way, but they recoil as fast another. Extrems are nearer meeting than many are aware of. An over-boiling Zeal for Religion

Religion, and no Religion at all, have often met in the same Person. The Preacher mentioneth the two Extreame of, *over-much Righteousness*, and *over-much Wickedness*, as bringing to the same End\*. The Memory of some of us can furnish us with a flagrant Instance, of such as lay many Months, if not Years, under the Terrors of Conscience, and, at length, came out of that Frame with Light, and Comfort, and Joy, and were for several Years, apparently virtuous, and godly, and religious in their Lives, and peculiarly zealous in their Way about Religion, and yet alas, after all proved very wicked Persons.

O the Depths of Satan! We had need take Care not to be ignorant of his Devices! and guard against the threatening Danger of mistaking human Passions, for the Working of the Spirit of God; and the burning Zeal, and hot Fervour of these Passions, operating humanly, is not worse, for a Zeal for God, and good Works. And however a prudent Guard against the foreseen Danger may be scoffed at, as if we were to be laughed out of our Reason, and Religion, at once, yet I pray God make us all, especially his Ministers, wise as Serpents, and harmless as Doves.

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From

\* Eccl. vii. 16, 17.

† They kept the soberest Company, frequented the Ministers, held their private Meeting with others at their Places of Abode, had often the Ministers to preach to them; I have myself preached to them, now, above forty Years ago.

*From Mr. TURELL's Directions to his People  
with Relation to the present Times. Boston  
1742. Page 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.*

I will again tell you, that none but Persons *ignorant, or wicked, or conceited*, undertake the Business of exhorting and opening the Scriptures to great Numbers call'd together for the Purpose. They must be grossly ignorant of the Tenor of the *Old and New Testament*, in which that Work is peculiarly assigned to other Persons, as might be made evident by Scores of Texts. Others of them are wicked and *deceiving Men*, going about purposing to deceive, by whom you are in Danger of being drawn aside and corrupted from the Simplicity that is of CHRIST. But whether they be *ignorant or wicked*, they are *ever* filled with *Pride and Conceit*, and want one *Essential* of true Zeal, namely, *Humility*. One of them that has been among us has proved himself a base *Liar*, and wish that others who go about may not turn out like one *Sam May*, (your Fathers and Mothers will remember him) a *filthy Fellow*, who offered the highest Incivilities to his Female Hearers. If we are disposed to receive even one for a *Teacher* that pretends to the Spirit, our Land will be filled with *Jesuits* in a short Time; and I am not without just Grounds of Fear, there are now among us, *Papists* and *Quakers* in Disguise. A late *Exhorter* the

spo



People of the *Two Sacraments*, and the Christian  
 Sabbath; and most of them (as you know)  
 proclaim every one his own *Goodness*. They  
 tell you how good they are, and how *sure* of  
 heaven they are; and give you to understand  
 that Religion is all *Extasy*: And all that will  
 not go their Length, (and they are infinite in  
 their Demands) are Hypocrites and *Pharisees*.  
 And I fear they are led to say these Things by  
 the *Words* and *Examples* of some zealous and  
 admired Preachers, who have visited our  
 neighbourhood of late. Men and Ministers  
 that kept close to the Word of GOD, and live  
 by some Measure up to the Rule of Life, the  
 Laws of CHRIST, these, (they say) are *Pha-*  
*riees*. But such Men and Ministers, who are  
 ever commending themselves, and despising  
 others, that pray and sing in the Streets, and  
 Markets, these are the true Christians, and the  
 men after GOD's own Heart. I can scarce  
 bear on such repeated Provocations, break-  
 ing forth in the Apostolick Strain, *O foolish*  
*Galatians, who hath bewitched you!* I desire to  
 see all Tenderness in Affairs of Religion and  
 Conscience; but I apprehend that my solemn  
*Ordination Vow* demands it of me, that I do bear  
 a *Faithful Testimony* against some Things which  
 are amiss among you. Your insatiable Thirst  
 of hearing Sermons upon Sermons, without  
 any Time for Prayer, Meditation, and Self-  
 examination between; and following every  
 new

new Preacher, must needs be prejudicial to your Souls. I am fully persuaded, that Persons under Conviction by the SPIRIT of GOD, or in Darkness upon his withdraw, will be more likely to be helped by one or two Ministers than by Twenty or an Hundred. *I pray you would not mistake me to mean* that I am against your hearing any of our worthy neighbouring Ministers in their own Pulpits or in mine. But *I beg of you my Children*, that you would labour to mortify a vain Curiosity and Affectation of Novelty. Be not carried away by every Breath that blows. — Besides what I have already mark'd as amiss, I will particularly name *thirteen Things* which I except against that are to be found, (if not in this Neighbourhood) yet in one Part of the Land, and another at this Day, — as is credibly reported.

1. There is a rash censorious Spirit and Temper prevailing. A judging Men's Hearts contrary to our LORD's strict Prohibitions in the beginning of this Chapter out of which I am Preaching. — And it has been carried to most unhallowed Length, even to the judging of Persons undiscoursed with, and unseen.

2. Some would make us believe, That Assurance is of the Essence of saving Faith. Yet that Faith is little else but a Persuasion that CHRIST is ours.

3. That none may approach the Lord's Table, but such as have this Fulness of Assurance

If this Principle prevails, our Communion Tables will be very thin, it not needless.

4. That there is a *Witness of the Spirit* given that we are the Children of GOD, *without* the concurring Testimony of our *own*; or it is so *distinct* that it may easily be distinguished from it, and that we need not *examine* it by the *Word*.

5. Persons laying so much Stress as they do in many Places on *Dreams, Trances, Visions, Revelations and Impulses*. It is said, that some will scarce ride a Mile, or cross a Ferry without the immediate Direction of the Spirit.

6. That Ministers should preach *without Study*, or depend on the *Spirit's Assistance*, both for *Words and Matter*, without any Endeavours of their own, to *seek out*, or set in Order what may be acceptable.

7. The Opinion, that unconverted Ministers are wholly *useless* to the Church; and no more likely to be made instrumental in the Hands of GOD, to convert and edify Souls, than *dead Men* to beget living Children.

8. The encouraging and suffering *Women* to pray and exhort in public Assemblies, as in some Places.

9. Many rash and *unguarded Expressions*; such as, The more good Works Men do the more they shall be *damned*, &c. which tends to drive all Virtue out of the World. I am sure 'tis no Part of the *calvinistical Scheme* in which I have been instructed and established.

10. A great Want of *Decency, Beauty, and Order* in the *House* of GOD, when *Persons cry out* either from a Sense of Sin and Wrath; or from a Sense of the pardoning Mercy of GOD, and Love of CHRIST. I own there may be *involuntary* Screamings on such Account; but when they happen, People and Ministers should keep their Places, and Order be preserved as much as possible. I am of Opinion they may be *excited* by Methods human, and that Divinity is not to be inscribed on them all. —

11. I apprehend, (and by Experience know) that too great Weight has been laid on *sudden Light and Comfort*, filling the Souls of Sinners. To be sure there is, when People are told it is *Unbelief* to fear afterwards, and that they must *not examine* the Grounds of their Comforts by the Word.

12. I can't see thro' Ministers introducing *Hymns* of human Composition into great and mixed Assemblies; especially when more than Half the People know not what is to follow: And this, if it be a Fault, is aggravated when it is a *Stranger* that does it. But then,

13. To sing them, or the Psalms of *David*, about the *Streets* and in *Ferry-Boats*, looks as like *Pharisaism*, as one *Egg* is like another. And it must be own'd, that such as follow this Practice in the *Evening*, yea, late in the *Night*, (which they can shew no Precept for) tends to disturb

and disturb Families, and has been the Occasion of much Sin in this Neighbourhood.

From Mr. CHAUNCY's Sermon on the Out-pouring of the Holy Ghost, *Pag.* 43, 44.

There are, I doubt not, a Number in this Land, upon whom God has graciously shed the Influences of his Blessed Spirit; and we ought to be thankful for what of the Spirit we have Reason to hope there is among us; but there is yet need of Prayer; and the more so, as so many Things have risen among us, which are a Dishonour to God, and may have a Tendency greatly to obstruct the Progress of real and substantial Religion. Alas! what unchristian Heats and Animosities are there in many Places, to the dividing and breaking in Pieces Churches and Towns? What a Spirit of rash, censorious, uncharitable Judging prevails too generally all over the Land? What Bitterness and Wrath, and Clamour, what Evil-speaking, Reviling and Slandering, are become common; and among those too who would be counted good Christians? How alienated are many Ministers from each other, how instrumental of hurting rather than promoting one another's Usefulness? What Prejudices are there in the Minds of too many People against the *Standing Ministry*, tho', perhaps, as faithful a one as any Part of the World is favoured with? And how general is the Disposition they discover



to flock after every weak and illiterate *Exhorter*, to the Contempt of their *Pastors*, who have spent, it may be, the most of their Days in faithful Services for their Souls? How heated are the Imaginations of a great many, and into what Excesses do they betray them? These and such like Things, it is too evident to be disown'd, are grown too common, not in a single Place only, but in most Places throughout the Country. How they may appear to some others, I know not; but to me, I confess they afford no comfortable Prospect.

*Pag. 45.* — Let us take heed that we don't harbour Prejudices in our Minds against the Spirit, his Office and Work upon the Hearts of Sinners: and while we are ready to give to the Divine Spirit the Honour of those Operations that are truly his, let us maintain a Care that we do not reflect Disgrace upon him, by making him the Author of those Things that are unworthy of him: The Spirit may be dishonour'd both these Ways; and perhaps he has been as much reproached by the latter, as he has been slighted by the former.

From Mr. PARSONS's Needful Caution in a  
Critical Day, a Sermon preached Feb. 4.  
1742. Printed at N. London, 1742. Pag. 67.

— I find no Quarter from whence they  
send out their *opprobrious* Invectives against  
the Truth more freely than from your rashly  
concluding Persons in a converted State who  
afterwards fall away into Errors, or some way  
make it evident that they were under a Delu-  
sion, or of Design imposed upon you. *There's*  
*one of your New Lights that has had a visiona-*  
*ry Representation of Heaven, and its amazing*  
*Glories, and has had the Lamb's Book of Life*  
*opened before his Eyes, and seen his own Name*  
*written there, in Letters of Gold. What a fine*  
*Account does he give? and how finely does he*  
*give and converse? The Effects of such Reve-*  
*lations do but answer my Expectations! This*  
*pretended Work of the Holy Spirit is all of a*  
*Piece, and you will shortly find it a mere En-*  
*thusiastick Cheat. Such Language as this,*  
*Dear Christians, are in the Mouths of Opposers*  
*is the Result of rash judging about the good E-*  
*state of Persons at the present Season of Grace:*  
*Therefore let it be a persuasive Argument with*  
*you to watch against such rash Conclusions,*  
*which are, instead of being the Evidences of*  
*Charity, the real Marks of an hellish Cruelty,*  
*and naturally tend to confirm and promote the*  
*Kingdom of the Devil.*

An *EXTRACT* from a LETTER of  
 Doctor BENJAMIN COLMAN's. Boston.  
 May 15. 1742.

—Some (young Ministers) in our Province, forming themselves by the fervent Mr. *Whitefield*, without his Gift, are but confused in their Discourses, which are addressed to the Passions of their Hearers, without opening their Subjects in any proper Method for enlightning their Minds. This has led me to publish my last Lecture-Sermon, to prevent our Students at *Cambridge* from going into this Error, and to recover many of our People from their vast Opinion of these noisie *Exhorters*, who have lately come to us from distant Places, and are crowded after; preaching without Study, and if we may believe their Prayers before their Sermons, not knowing the Subject they shall speak from: You will see with what Solemnity, Mr. *Turell* and Mr. *Parsons* are forced to caution their People, and I believe the Fervour and Pathos of Mr. *Parsons*, would much more effect you, could you know the Power, with which God hath blessed his Labours. —

All this, notwithstanding, there has been a great and glorious Work of GOD, going on among us, from the Day of Mr. *Whitefield's* Visit to us; but Satan has been busy also many Ways to obstruct it, transforming himself in an appearing Zeal to serve it, as well by some approved

ER of approved and learned Ministers, as by illite-  
 Boston late Exhorters; who, in their Zeal and exces-  
 sive Labours, are judging, censorious, break-  
 ing into the Cures of others, and alienating  
 the Hearts of many from their Ministers, as  
 Mr. unconverted Persons, pretending themselves  
 refused to great Sanctity, and full Assurance of their  
 ed to own Salvation; and too suddenly assuring  
 ening those, that admire and much affect them, and  
 r-enjecting others. The Prospect therefore be-  
 ne to ere us is dark and dubious, and like, I fear, to  
 event be more and more so; as it is in *Connecticut*,  
 o this where the very College is almost broken up,  
 People as we hear, which makes Mr. *Parsons* his Dis-  
 Exhor- course very seasonable there, for Nobody will  
 istant suspect him a back Friend to the good Work of  
 with GOD. Our Calm at *Boston* has been lately  
 Pray- ruffled, and we are early giving warning, but  
 g the we are threatened with some Visitors within a  
 ill see Month, whose overboiling Zeal has set other  
 l Mr. Places in Flames, and too many of our People  
 people will be too much Tinder to take Fire. My  
 f Mr. Brother *Cooper* has printed Mr. *Mac—in's*  
 could Account of the Manner and Success of Mr.  
 hath *Whitefield* among you, which I also inclose.  
 He is beginning to fear and apprehend with  
 een a ne the Consequences of Things, which are  
 on a what you apprehend or find of a contemptu-  
 field's ous Disrespect of the present and past settled  
 many Ministry, and Manner of Preaching and Ad-  
 self in ministration, as formless, lifeless, graceless. I  
 some am sorry to hear, that it has been a Time of  
 roved Pinching,

Pinching, Scarcity and Penury with you, &c. Mr. *Whitefield* visited us in the right Time and found large Contributions here. I doubt not but he will faithfully apply what he collects for his *Orphan-House*, but I have said to him, that it will to me appear a greater Wonder, if his Faith is answered in that Foundation than that of Monsieur *Franks* at *Hall* in *Prussia* was; the one being in the midst of *Europe* the other in the Confines of *America*. But the Order and Piety of the House is admirable and so the Progress of the Settlement, alone as it is in the World, by the Report of all that visit it. But how it can subsist, and flourish, and answer the Founder's End, is the Enquiry here, and will be a Marvel in the Providence of GOD, if it do so.

P. S. Mr. *Whitefield's* Friends have been too free with my Letters, in printing Part of them, and mixing them with Parts of others without Distinction.

BENJAMIN COLMAN.

F I N I S.